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No. 216

The Christian News-Letter

Edited by
J. H. OLDHAM

September 6th, 1944

DEAR MEMBER,

The more rapid the advance of the liberating armies to final victory, the more urgent it becomes to make up our minds about the ends for which victory is to be used. But before saying something about this subject, we may pick up the thread of a discussion begun a few weeks ago, which will serve as a useful introduction to the other.

In C.N-L. No. 212, Miss Violet Markham expressed her concern about the gloom and depression about the future prevailing in wide circles, and urged the Christian News-Letter to lead the way in an attack on pessimism and weariness and to "raise an oriflamme round which the Knights of the Holy Ghost can gather." Her letter has stimulated Miss Dorothy L. Sayers to write to us as follows.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERE AND NOW

"I feel that I have (in the Quaker phrase) a concern to say something about Miss Violet Markham's letter in C.N-L. No. 212.

"I agree entirely with her that there exists, alongside of a good deal of foolish optimism, a wide-spread and almost despairing dread concerning things to come, so that many thoughtful people say they are more afraid of the peace than of the war.

"I am inclined to think that these extremes of optimism and pessimism are both brought about by the very fact that, as Paul Tillich says in the same issue, 'we urgently want to have at least a glimpse into the future.' More than that, we insist on living in the future—we are haunted by the end of civilization and the goal of history. But that is precisely the thing the Christian has been warned not to do. *Nolite ergo solliciti esse in crastinum*: 'Do not push your thinking away into the future—the future must do its own thinking.' Our job is to live in the present, to 'do the next thing,' as the old phrase has it. If, instead of dealing directly with the present, 'the point at which time touches eternity,' we are perpetually trying to 'penetrate into the darkness of the unknown future,' and live ahead of ourselves, we shall find that *le silence de ces espaces infinis m'effraie*. I do not mean, of course, that we ought not to do our best, now, for posterity; but we cannot live posterity's life for it, and we shall go mad if we try.

"We, of all peoples on earth, ought not to let ourselves be hag-ridden by history—especially by the un-history which is not history until we make it. The English spirit is in nothing so naturally Christian as in its native preference for coping with situations as they arise—not surrendering the will to horrid fantasies or millenarian vapourings, but

settling the *present* quarrel, confronting the *imminent* menace, performing the *immediate* act of justice or charity, perceiving the situation as it *now is*, and addressing all available energy to *that*. We ought not to let ourselves be shamed or indoctrinated out of this peculiarly Christian grace. To set the treasure of the heart upon the future is to set it upon nothing; for until the future has become the present it cannot be experienced.

"Miss Markham says, truly, that in 1940 we survived because we 'wouldn't accept defeat.' I think it would be true to add that we survived because we wouldn't accept the future from the hands of contemporary prophecy. We were nearly lost by the people who brooded so much upon the decline of the West and the horrors of conflicts to come that they became quite incapable of taking any steps to do anything at all. We were saved by the people who lived for the day, attacking each bomber as it arrived, extinguishing each fire as it broke out, propping up each thing as it fell down, putting in emergency sanitation as need arose, receiving each stranger as he or she appeared on the doorstep, signing each new form as it descended from above, concentrating on each energy as the moment demanded, 'doing the next thing.' Because of this, the future, as predicted, never became an actual present.

"The *area* of a man's 'present' is determined, of course, by his vocation: in the 'unending battle' which lies ahead the officer must look a little further forward than the private, the field-marshal further than the officer, the War Cabinet further than the Field-Marshal, the statesman further still; but the business of each is to tackle what, *for him*, is 'the next thing,' and the readiness is all.

"One of the most oppressive consequences of the doctrine of Perfectibility has been to bind upon us the burden of illimitable futurity. We have exchanged the Christian *Now* for a false infinity of ever-receding *Not-Now*: is it any wonder that we are 'disturbed about history'? But we are not really required to carry the whole of time on our shoulders; that is God's business. Our business is to carry the *Now*. The hankering for 'solutions' which shall settle this, that, or the other problem 'for all time,' and the fretful feeling that any solution which does less than this is no solution at all, are symptoms of that original ambition to be 'as Gods' which, notoriously, 'brought death into the world and all our woe.'

"To suggest that we should not be solicitous out of all reason for the morrow does, no doubt, lay one open to the charge of being complacent, short-sighted and lacking in a proper sense of responsibility; nevertheless, since the suggestion has good authority behind it, it may not be out of place to make it."

Miss Sayers in her last paragraph distinguishes the Christian attitude from its counterfeits. There is a kind of living in the present that is the prelude to disaster. "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and they knew not until the flood came." Men can be absorbed in the pursuit of an immediate object because they are blind to what is happening in the world and its inevitable consequences. Many people have not yet awakened to the fact that the whole foundations of society are being shaken. But we

have to face also the opposite danger to which Miss Markham and Miss Sayers seek to arouse us. Those who see without blinkers the forces of disintegration at work in Europe and in the world and open their minds to the realities of the situation, as these have been portrayed from time to time in the Christian News-Letter, may find themselves overwhelmed by the feeling that what the individual can do bears no sort of relation to the multiplicity, size and gravity of the problems that confront us. Is it possible to look reality in the face and remain undismayed ?

THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF GERMANY

We already stand on the threshold of the colossal task of the restoration of a devastated Europe, of which the treatment of a defeated Germany forms an inseparable part.

One has only to dip into the literature about the future of Germany to find that all the plans put forward are based on assumptions which may or may not turn out to be correct. The military, political, economic and cultural factors are so many, varied and interlinked that what is obviously the desirable arrangement at one point may be completely upset by an unexpected upheaval at another. This complexity diminishes the influence which individuals and groups can exert on foreign policy, while political pressure in favour of a particular view, however right in itself, may actually do harm rather than good by upsetting the balance of interests which it is the aim of a wise statesmanship to achieve. When we reflect further that British foreign policy is only one among the many powerful forces that will shape the future of Europe, the influence that any individual can exert on the course of events seems reduced to insignificance.

It is none the less true that what determines the course of history is the day-to-day behaviour of millions of ordinary people, acting in accordance with what seems to them to matter most, and that each of us is making his contribution, however infinitesimal, to the direction which events will take. Each bears a responsibility to God and his fellow-men of which he cannot divest himself.

If it is really true that the future is unforeseeable and beyond human control, and that there is no calculable purpose to the realization of which our actions can be directed, how are we to steer our course ? An important part of the answer is given, I believe, in what Professor Karl Mannheim has written about "paradigmatic experiences," of which something has been said in earlier News-Letters.[1] For modern sociology life is a continuous adjustment of the individual or group to ever-changing situations. Experience shows, however, that there may be a great variety of successful adjustments to the same situation. What determines the choice of one rather than another ? Dr. Mannheim's answer is that it is some basic, crucial experience in which the meaning of life has been revealed and which provides a pattern for conduct.

As a preliminary to the discussion of practical questions which will arise in the coming weeks and months, we shall ask in this News-Letter whether there are certain crucial Christian experiences by which our attitude towards Germany ought to be determined.

[1] C.N-L. Nos. 174, 183.

HUMILITY BEFORE GOD

First, and quite fundamental, in the Christian attitude is the knowledge that we who have to deal with Germany are not righteous persons, but sinners.

This does not mean that there is no profound difference between the standards in defence of which we are fighting and the odious doctrines which have gained ascendancy in Germany. If these differences were not real the war would have no moral significance. It is unhappily true that the Nazis are not only willing to do, but revel in doing, things which our own people could not and would not do.

It is at the same time perilous to be the champions of a just cause. The thought that we are better than our enemies fosters a spirit of self-righteousness. It blinds us to our own faults. We are never in greater danger of falling into egregious mistakes than when we are self-satisfied.

While it is impossible to exaggerate the enormity of the evil which Germany has brought upon the world, to suppose that all that is needed to put things right is to get rid of this source of infection would be the gravest of blunders. Our orientation would be wrong from the start. We should be giving attention to part of the problem instead of to the whole. So monstrous an insanity and so complete a perversion of human values as war is evidence of a more deep-seated and widespread malady than the aberration of one section of European society. Germany is a portent because tendencies that pervaded Western civilization have there come to full fruition. If we are to deal with the roots of the evil we must centre our attention on the false ways of thinking and the pursuit of mistaken ends which are common to the whole of Western society.

It is part of our historic task in conjunction with our allies to impose terms on Germany which will, so far as is humanly possible, restrain her from again inflicting on humanity the outrage of war, and to punish those who have committed flagrant crimes against the dignity of man. But the knowledge that we are ourselves sinners and that we, as well as our enemies, stand under the impartial judgment of God, will save us from the presumption of arrogating to ourselves the function of dispensing divine justice. Vengeance is a prerogative which God has reserved to Himself. As the Archbishop of anterbury has recently declared,[1] "we are *not* called to be the nscious and deliberate executants of God's justice."

The Christian paradigmatic experience of our own sinfulness and shortcoming will not furnish us with *direct* guidance in the decision of particular questions. But in so far as it is present as an undercurrent,

[1] In a preface to a revised edition of Stephen Hobhouse's *Christ and our Enemies* (S.P.C.K. 9d.). I commend this pamphlet both because of the important statement by the Archbishop and because the pamphlet itself is the work of an honest mind sincerely seeking to find and follow the way of Christ, and embodying the fruits not merely of theoretic discussion but of a varied, deep and costly experience. I differ from the writer about the war, and he does not make the clear distinction which seems to me to be necessary between the relations of individuals and the relations of groups, and between the sphere of the Church and the sphere of the State. But in regard to the basic Christian experience which, as contrasted with public policy, is the main theme of this News-Letter, there is much in the pamphlet to which every Christian must assent and from which we may all derive help.

correcting, qualifying and mellowing judgment at this or that point, it will save us from the worst and most calamitous mistakes which result from self-righteousness, vainglory and pride.

TRUTH

Secondly, it is crucial in Christian experience that *truth* has been revealed in Jesus Christ. It is the theme of the New Testament that God is worshipped and served in unswerving devotion to the truth. From the fundamental response to the disclosure of ultimate truth in Jesus Christ springs a reverence for truth over the whole range of human life.

If we are to deal rightly with Germany the first necessity is to know the facts, undistorted by passion, sentiment or self-interest. Europe can be restored to health only by a statesmanship inspired by a thorough-going realism. The true realism is one that sees with equal clearness the forces of evil and destruction and the elements of promise and hope, and attaches due weight to each.

In a debate in the House of Lords a few weeks ago there was a sharp passage of arms between Lord Vansittart and the Bishop of Chichester. Lord Vansittart, who is moved to the depths of his being by the hideous suffering and blight which Germany has brought upon mankind, is determined that the facts relating to beliefs, dispositions and behaviour which prevail in Germany and which he believes to be the cause of this untold suffering, shall be fully known and fully taken into account in future policy towards Germany. He is in the right against those who in their eagerness for reconciliation and in the desire to achieve a premature harmony brush aside these harsh facts and underestimate the virulence of the evil which has infected the German people.

But the Bishop of Chichester is equally justified in drawing attention to another range of facts, and Lord Vansittart's charge that he was 100 per cent Germanophile was a travesty of what the Bishop actually said. There can be no stable order in Europe without the co-operation of the German people and the contribution of their productive energies, and every bit of evidence of the presence of constructive forces deserves the closest attention of those who would build wisely.

It is beyond the power of most of us, nor is it our direct responsibility, to master the endless variety of relevant facts and fit them into a coherent view, and to appraise rightly the deep forces, demonic and redemptive, that are in conflict in the German soul. What we can do is to recognize the bias to which we are all in greater or less degree subject and to refuse to allow it to deflect us from the disinterested search for truth.

MERCY

Thirdly, central in Christian experience is the knowledge that we owe everything to the mercy of God. Mercy is the keynote of the New Testament. Its whole message is summed up in the words of the collect: "O God, who declarest Thy almighty power most chiefly in

showing pity and mercy." And with this revelation of the mercy of God goes the obligation to show mercy to others. Nothing stands out more prominently in the teaching of Christ than the inseparable connection between the mercy of God and human mercifulness.

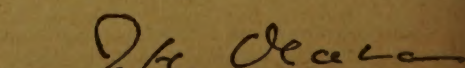
The obligation to show mercy is for the Christian not open to argument. It is a plain and binding duty. But the spirit of mercy is not the same thing as making a lenient peace. The truth about Germany and mercy towards the victims of German ruthlessness may require a stern peace. There is no *direct* argument from the deepest insights of Christian faith to the requirements of the political order, in which account has to be taken of the hardness of men's hearts. What is said here is in no sense a plea for softness in the political sphere which Germany might exploit.

When we have ceased to confuse the spirit of mercy with a misplaced leniency, it will be plain that, unless all that we do and plan is tempered with mercy, our efforts to restore Europe will be doomed to failure, since mercifulness is the essential basis of true human relations. The religious knowledge that God is merciful and loves mercy may prove to be the source of the highest political wisdom. One of the gravest threats in the present situation to the higher life of mankind is the ebb of human compassion. The practice of torture has been reintroduced into the Western world on a terrifying scale. A recent article in *The Times* on resistance in France recorded the fact that the resisters knew that capture meant certain torture and almost certain disclosure, since torture has been refined to such a point that almost any power of endurance can be broken down. If the decline into a fiendish inhumanity is to be reversed it can only be by a counter passion of overflowing mercy. And while mercy can be stern, it cannot be fitful ; it can operate only as a fixed habit of the soul.

A Christian approach to the problems of the post-war world is no guarantee of immunity from mistakes. An endless number of difficult decisions have to be made in the light of imperfect knowledge, under the pressure of intractable forces and subject to all the handicaps of human frailty. But in proportion as the temper of the coming time is infused and vitalized by fundamental Christian insights, the general trend will be in harmony with the grain and truth of things, and we can work in the confidence that " in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

The writer of the Supplement is the Rector of Great Easton, Dunmow, and the honorary secretary of the Russian Clergy and Church Aid Fund. He has for many years followed closely the affairs of the Orthodox Church in Russia and kept touch with some of its leading members. Few outside Russia are better qualified to write about it.

Yours sincerely,



RELIGION IN RUSSIA

By the Rev. Canon P. E. T. WIDDRINGTON

The publication of the long delayed translation of the volume issued by the Moscow Patriarchate under the title *The Truth About Religion in Russia*,[1] raises a question which must be answered. It concerns the sincerity and trustworthiness of the leaders of the Orthodox Church. If we accept their testimony we are forced to a drastic reconsideration of the religious situation in Russia. In Matthew Arnold's words, the moment has arrived when we must let our minds play freely upon our stock opinions. For the facts which emerge from this curious compilation are :—

(1) The wholehearted acceptance by the Church of the Soviet *régime*, and of the legislation affecting the Church's activities.

(2) The steady growth of friendly relations between the leaders of the Church and the Soviet Government.

(3) The identification of the Church with the Russian people in its effort and determination to drive out the invader, and the amazing sacrifices which churchmen have made (no Church in Europe has made such voluntary contributions. One of the questions which I understand was asked of the Archbishop of York during his visit was : " What is your Church doing in the national effort ? ") ; the emphatic denial that the Government has persecuted the Christians as such, and the insistence on the differentiation between the attitude to religion of the Government on the one hand, and, on the other, of the various public organizations carrying out anti-religious propaganda, such as, for instance, the Society of Militant Atheism (see page 58).

(4) The Orthodox Church welcomes its disestablishment and disendowment and the fact that it is no longer able to dominate other religious faiths.

The book was published two years ago, and much has happened since to cement the new understanding between the Church and the Government. But before saying anything about those developments I propose to state the grounds for accepting the statements of the Church's leaders as sincere.

With one accord they affirm that there is no restriction upon their liberty as a Church, and that the article of the revised constitution which allows freedom for religious cult and freedom for anti-religious propaganda assures the essential freedom of the Church. To most English people this article suggests an intolerable restriction of religious freedom, and we are at a loss to understand how the Russian Church can acquiesce in such a law. But unless we are prepared to repudiate the testimony of bishops, clergy and laymen, it is clear that the difficulty we feel does not exist for them. They do not contemplate or apparently

[1] Hutchinson, 16s.

desire any alteration of the law which they regard as assuring the Church genuine freedom.

To quote from the preliminary statement by the editors: "The Soviet Government's decree on freedom of religious conscience and of religious profession lifted the weight which had been lying on the Church for so many years. It freed the Church from external tutelage. This liberation has been of enormous benefit to the inner life of the Church. . . . It is a very blessing for our Orthodox Church that it has ceased to be the established Church and thereby, like a lever of autocracy, to fetter the conscience of other confessions."

Not the least of the benefits of disestablishment has been the release of the clergy from the many secular tasks imposed upon them under the Tsarist *régime*. The loss of worldly prestige, privileges and of endowments, far from being resented is hailed as a step towards the purification of the Church. This is brought out in a highly significant passage in the introduction which the late Patriarch contributed. "It is the fact that ordinary Orthodox people, hearing in the Gospel Christ's instructions to His apostles, reading St. Paul's epistles, or the life of a Christian hero such as St. John Chrysostom, feels strongly that the change which has taken place is not persecution, but rather a return to apostolic times, when the Church and its clergy followed the true path to which they were called by Christ, when they considered their ministration not as a profession which, being one among many secular professions, gave them their means of livelihood, but as their way of answering the call of Christ. That path, winnowed by the ideals of the people, sanctified by the highest traditions of the Orthodox Church, and at the same time spiritually most fruitful, and which is the path of service for the salvation of men, the patriarchal Church has set itself to follow and calls on its clergy to follow. Since the Revolution the Church has suffered great loss of numbers. The separation of the Church from the State removed the artificial barriers which kept people within the Church and nominal Church folk left us."

SERGIUS AS LEADER AND BRIDGE BUILDER

There is no understanding of the recent history of the Russian Church apart from a study of the career of the late Patriarch. For Sergius exercised as dominating an influence in the affairs of the Church as has Stalin on national policy. He has been called a time-server, a careerist, willing to accept any compromise so long as the Church was allowed to survive as an institution, even if the survival meant a servitude as ignoble as its servitude under Tsardom. He had to meet attacks both from within and without Russia. There is an impression in this country that he was a narrow-minded ecclesiastic: his critical attitude towards proposals for reunion with the Anglican Communion was possibly responsible for this. But there is a lamentable ignorance about the outstanding facts of his career.

What is not generally realized is his unique qualifications for leadership in the greatest crisis that the Church has ever endured in Russia. So far from being a narrow-minded ecclesiastic, he was a man of rich and varied experiences of life. Before his elevation to the

episcopate, he had served two periods as a missionary in Japan, been chaplain at the embassy in Athens, and had been on the staff of the Academy at St. Petersburg. But most important of the facts about him is his close association with the reform movements within the Church which marked the early years of the century. He was one of the bishops who, when asked for their views on church reform in 1906, voted for disestablishment; but earlier, in 1901, when the intellectuals —amongst them Berdyaev, Merejkovsky, Frank, Kartasheff and others —organized the philosophic religious group, the purpose of which was to discuss the impact of Christianity on life, it was Sergius who for two winters chaired the discussions. Through these discussions he acquired a good knowledge of the Marxian dialectic. He was then thirty-five, Rector of St. Petersburg Academy and a bishop.

An extract from the sermon he preached at his consecration gives an insight into his mind: "The external conditions of the episcopal service may be highly varied. Bishops may be in high honour and riches, may have the advantage of broad civil rights and privileges, but they may also be entirely without such rights. All this depends on chance and external causes, on the position of Christianity in the State, on national and social customs. With the changing of these external causes the position of the bishop may also change. But episcopal service in its essence remains the same apostolic service, the service of reconciliation, the service of a pastor. And to be a pastor means to live not one's own life, but the life of the flock, to sicken with their illnesses, to carry their weaknesses, with a single purpose of striving for their salvation, to die that the flock might live."

When the Sobor met in 1918, its first meeting since the reign of Peter the Great, Sergius, now Archbishop of Nijni-Novgorod, was a prominent figure amongst the reform party. One of the acts of that short-lived assembly was the elevation of Sergius to the rank of Metropolitan. So strong were his sympathies with the reform party that they led him to join the Living Church. But discovering its secular and heretical tendencies, Sergius did open penance, was received back into the Orthodox Church, and restored to his office.

Following on the exile of Peter, the locum tenens of the patriarchal see, Sergius found himself nominated as *his* locum tenens. For six months he was under arrest; but lost no time, once he was released, in coping with a situation which was chaotic. His first step was to secure the legal status of the Church as a registered society, after giving an assurance of its loyalty to the Soviet Government as the government of Russia *de jure* as well as *de facto*. Never at any time did he waver in his loyalty to the Government nor in his faith that the Soviet system would give the Russian people a standard of life they had never had. He was fully alive to the fundamental contradiction between communist Bolshevism and Orthodoxy; but was patient because he foresaw the inevitable modification of the Marxian programme. "Any vital society after suffering an eruption returns to the climate best suited to its nature and to its historical evolution." Had not Lenin written: "Our teaching is not dogma. Life will show us. . . . We know the direction . . . but only the experience of millions as they move to their task will discover the road."

Throughout its history the Orthodox Church had been identified with the nation. It had sought to live in the life of the people, and share its joys and sorrows: that was its duty and aim under the New Order. Stalin and the other Soviet leaders came to trust him, and the long list of concessions made to the Church during the past ten years are mainly due to the influence he acquired with the Kremlin.

When Germany attacked Russia he immediately mobilized all the resources of the Church, spiritual and temporal, in support of the national effort. His final triumph was the re-establishment of the office of Patriarch with the full approval of the Government. As Paul Anderson has so well said: "The recognition accorded in 1927 was that of an element foreign to the State and the Soviet *régime*; the recognition of 1943 (the re-establishment of the Patriarchate) meant that those in authority were convinced that the Church was indeed a true element in the life of the Russian people in the present time of trial, suffering and victorious advance." Some words that Professor Toynbee applies to St. Augustine may well be used of Sergius: "A genius who was also a saint; who had the spiritual insight to see that the venerable social edifice which was falling about his ears was after all a prison-house, and that catastrophe might spell the Christian's liberation."

SOME QUESTIONS AND CRITICISMS

I am aware that the views I have set forth will not commend themselves to a large section of English opinion, which is still highly critical of the policy pursued by Sergius. One of the charges made against him is that his policy involved the surrender of the Church's task of evangelization; so long as the oppressive legislation of 1929 remained unrepealed, the legislation which vetoed those activities which we in the West associate so closely with Church life, it was the duty of the Orthodox Church to register its protest.

To this I would answer that the legislation of 1929 was aimed at the Evangelical and Baptist Churches, whose success in open-air and social work had provoked the hostility of the Godless Union. In the early years of the Revolution the Evangelical and Baptist Churches were encouraged by the Government, and made full use of their opportunities. Their churches were centres of social activities, and attracted young people. Maurice Hindus, in his book *The Great Offensive*, writes: "In 1924, I found in city after city, and village after village, the Protestants out in the open. Everywhere in the bazaars Evangelical and Baptist preachers were holding forth on the meaning of their faith, unmolested either by Soviets or Communists."

But the methods of the Russian Church differ from those of the Protestant Churches of the West. It has never had Sunday Schools, Bible Classes and the many social activities we have come to consider as an essential part of the Church's machinery. After all, the Church in this country managed to survive without them until the beginning of the nineteenth century. It has been through the Liturgy that the Russian has learnt his religion: "I affirm that our peasants were already enlightened a long time ago by accepting Christ and His teach-

ing. The man of the people knows everything, although he would not pass an examination in the catechism. He learned in the churches, where during centuries he heard prayers and psalms which are better than any sermons" (Dostoievsky's speech on Pushkin). Of all the liturgies of the Christian Church, the Orthodox is the most complete setting-forth of the revelation of God in the creation, redemption and sanctification of man. There is a Russian saying: "Orthodoxy does not teach, it illuminates." A Russian child learns the essentials of its religion in the home. Maurice Hindus in his most recent book, *Mother Russia*, remarks that the efforts of the Godless Union to stamp out religion amongst the children have been defeated by the grandmothers whose function has always been to teach the young the Faith. The return of so many men and women to the Faith since the war is surely evidence that evangelization may be achieved as effectively through the exquisite beauty of the Church's Liturgy, backed by the quiet influence of convinced believers, as by open propaganda. The Kingdom of God is as leaven—hid.

There is a further question to which at the moment I can find no completely satisfactory answer. It concerns the freedom of religious bodies other than the Orthodox. It is alleged that in Estonia Protestant Churches were treated abominably by the Soviet Government. The alleged facts are set forth in detail in a pamphlet recently published. Whether this persecution was initiated by orders of the Soviet Government, or was due to certain communist elements in Estonia itself, is not clear. In such a vast territory as Russia acts are committed, and policies put into operation that have not the authority of the central Government. Such treatment as that alleged is inconsistent with the policy adopted by the Government in other territories incorporated in the Union. An article in *The Times* of August 18th, dealing with Latvia and Estonia, remarks that it is not perhaps sufficiently known that in 1940 Moscow on several occasions opposed the policy of the revolutionaries in Latvia and Estonia. There is both in regard to the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant bodies a suspicion that they are under foreign influence. Time must elapse before the bogey of foreign interference disappears from the Russian mind.

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

In the two years since the publication of *The Truth About Religion in Russia*, an increasingly friendly attitude towards the Church has been apparent; and if the successor of Sergius continues his policy we may hope for a new day for Orthodoxy. The war has demonstrated that Orthodoxy is an indestructible element in the nation and its history. More concessions have been made to the Church. For instance the theological seminary in Moscow was re-opened last January, and there is every prospect that no opposition will be offered to the re-opening both of the seminaries and of the four academies. The scheme for the form of the training of ordinands will, when it gets going, provide the Russian Church with a priesthood equipped to minister in the strange new world.

Under the old system of training no provision was made for instruction in secular knowledge. Under the new, no one will be accepted for training who has not been in the State schools until his eighteenth year, and he will receive both in the seminary, and in the academy, training in sociology, history and philosophy. In the old days the Ministry was almost entirely drawn from priests' sons. That day is ended.

Again, the schismatic Living Church is disintegrating. It is reported in *Pantainos*, the organ of the patriarchate of Alexandria, that its bishops and clergy—with the notable exception of the Metropolitan VVedensky—are endeavouring to return to the bosom of the Orthodox Church, and are accepting the penances imposed, which carry with them in most instances reduction in ecclesiastical status.

No information is obtainable about the position of the Protestant Churches; but there is little doubt that they have declined in numbers. In the *Soviet War News* of July 4th, it is reported that "by decree of the People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., a Council for Matters Relating to Religious Creeds has been organized to maintain contact between the Soviet Government and the following religious associations: the Armenian Gregorian, Old Believers, Catholic, Greek Catholic and Lutheran Churches; the Moslem, Judaic and Buddhistic religions, and sectarian organizations. The Council will deal with problems of these religious creeds demanding the attention of the Government of the U.S.S.R."

Orthodoxy is faithful to its ideal of Holy Russia. It has shown an amazing power of adaptation to its new environment. It has taken the despoiling of its worldly goods gladly, and that, and the loss of worldly prestige, are serving to purify the Church. I conclude with some words of Paul Anderson from his book *People, Church and State in Modern Russia*,[1] the best book that has yet been written on the subject: "The Church in Soviet Russia can teach the world much about dependence on the Holy Spirit, and about the power of the Spirit. It has revealed how with wealth, prestige, earthly authority, even the teaching function removed, the Church not only survives, but grows in power and influence. Stripped to the only elements permitted by law —conscience and the celebration of the sacraments—the knowledge of God has been kept alive, and the power and love of God have been made manifest even to those who do not believe."

[1] S.C.M. Press, 6s.

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